

*High Level Stakeholders meeting on UPR and NAP
Lemigo Hotel, 25th April 2017*

Speech by the Minister of Justice/Attorney General

- Excellencies, Ambassadors and Heads of Diplomatic missions in Rwanda
- Distinguished representatives of government institutions, civil society and UN organizations;
- Ladies and gentlemen

A very good morning to you all.

I am pleased to welcome you to this High Level Stakeholders meeting on UPR recommendations progress. This meeting is part of the UPR implementation process stemming from the second cycle of the Universal Periodic Review.

I would like to start by thanking you for your continued commitment to engage with us in this process. We are happy to see a diverse audience at today's consultation. All of the participants present here today – Government, development partners, UN colleagues, media and civil society – have important roles in the UPR process.

Let me first of all take you through the chronology of events since the start of the second cycle of our UPR process

In November 2015, Rwanda went through the second review on the implementation of 67 recommendations accepted by Rwanda in 2011. During the second review, Rwanda accepted 50 recommendations to implement in 4 years.

In September 2016, the Ministry of Justice together with Government Institutions and Civil Society adopted a roadmap to implements the 50 recommendations issued to Rwanda.

In October 2016, the Ministry of Justice disseminated the matrix of UPR recommendations to concerned institutions for implementation.

The purpose of today's meeting is to evaluate our progress in the implementation of that matrix, six months after it was shared with concerned institutions. But we want also to share with you Rwanda's Human Rights Action Plan 2017-2020 which was adopted at the beginning of this year. This action is, for us, another key enabler in the implementation of the UPR.

In February this year, after being approved by the Cabinet, the Ministry of Justice published the National Human Rights Action Plan of Rwanda (2017-2020). It is Rwanda's first national plan on the theme of human rights, and serves as a phase-in policy on advancing Rwanda's human rights agenda in a holistic way.

We are in the process of publicizing it and its implementation has begun. We will work with institutions of government at all levels nationwide to incorporate this plan into their work and adopt effective measures to implement it based on a mid- and long-term basis. I hope that our development partners, non-governmental organizations, media organizations, academic and research institutions and the general public will also be actively involved in the popularization, education and dissemination of the action plan as well as support and monitor its implementation.

An inclusive process is an important feature of this UPR. This follow-up phase we are in is perhaps the most critical. Commitment to implementing recommendations we accepted, and Government working on this with all willing stakeholders , will result in a report that is wholly or broadly

objective and agreeable. We will, therefore, continue to prioritize inclusive participation and transparency as indispensable elements of the process.

Today's consultation is an excellent opportunity for the Government, the civil society and other stakeholders to provide feedback on what we can do better to accelerate the implementation of these recommendations

I once again call on and encourage active Civil Society participation in the implementation of this phase as we have been since the beginning.

Finally, let me most sincerely thank all non- Governmental stakeholders.

We are aware that it is the Government's constitutional obligation to protect preserve and promote human rights. If non - Governmental actors did not show up to work with us; it would still remain a Government obligation albeit heavy. Thank you for not just silently voluntarily carrying our load with us but also sharing with us your candid ideas, observations, and concerns all in an effort to make the load lighter and more valuable.